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Media Branding in Javanese local media “Panjebbar Semangat”

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ABSTRACT

The digital era is exposing the media industry and the audience to a new phenomenon, it is convergence. Convergence becomes a real challenge have to be faced by the entire media industry, from global to local media industries. The convergence faced by local media is a bigger challenge due to limited financial and resources. Various studies show that adaptation is mostly done by utilizing platforms in new media to re-embrace segmentation and even add new audience segmentations. The forms of adaptation presented show the elements of branding media in it. According to Malmelin and Moisander (2014) there are five concepts of branding media that are often used, they are brand extension, brand as identity, brand as differentiation, brand as equity, and brand as a product. This article will show the side of branding media by the local Javanese language magazine "Panjebbar Semangat" in the middle of adaptation efforts to convergence. The discussion will be related to the five concepts presented by Malmelin and Moisander (2014). The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative. Data collection was carried out by interview and observation on the Panjebbar Semangat social media account. The results show that the branding media activities carried out by Panjebbar Semangat are dominated by the concept of brand extension and brand as a product. The branding media can also give well benefit by local media with limited funding sources to optimize adaptation to convergence.

Keywords: *convergence, local media, branding media*

1. INTRODUCTION

The digital era is both an opportunity and a threat to the development of the conventional mass media industry. This opportunity will be realized if the mass media can develop and adapt to the emergence of *new media* as a marker of the digital era. This threat arose when the mass media did not have a strong position and were being eroded by technological advances. The existence of new media not only accelerates the flow of information, but also makes it easier for the audience to obtain information. This is one of the factors in decreasing audience access to media, especially printed media. Executive Director of the Indonesian Press Company Union (SPS). Asmono Wikan, stated that technological development is one of the factors affecting the condition of the printed media. People are slowly turning to accessing information via the Internet, including news (Prihatin, 2015).

The digital era then exposes the media industry and the *audience* to a new phenomenon, it is convergence. Convergence is widely understood by various groups as a form of utilizing various media *platforms* in delivering information. Convergence is not simple. Jenkins (2004) and Latzer (2013) explain that convergence can occur at various levels including: technological convergence, economic convergence in the communications sector, political convergence, to socio-cultural convergence. Convergence represents cultural change that causes *auditors* to dare and seek new information and make connections between media content (Jenkins, 2008). The challenges of convergence are increasingly faced by various elements in mass communication.

Convergence is a form of real challenge that must be faced by the entire media industry, both global and local media industries. The large media industry is able to take advantage of the conditions to expand its information distribution *platform* with various adjustments. This fact is a threat to the public and policy makers because it is feared to create oligopoly in media companies. This condition is real and currently facing Indonesia. Currently, there are five large active companies active in the broadcasting world in Indonesia (Tapsell, 2015).

The challenge of convergence becomes greater faced by local media. Jenkins (2004) explains that the level of convergence experienced by media companies will vary widely. Media companies with large capital can easily adapt both financially and in terms of their own media products. However, it will be difficult for media companies with little capital, they will end up just going with the flow with more effort. The changes arise in the convergence of media require local media to immediately face it so their knowledge is not increasingly abandoned. adjustments to content, *platforms*, to new segmentation were also carried out. Several studies have shown that the most adjustment efforts carried out mid media convergence are changes and additional *platforms* for content distribution and interaction with *audiences*.

Several researchs has been done to demonstrate the ability of local media to survive convergence. For example, a research conducted by Achmad & Ida (2019) explains on how a local radio "Jodhipati FM" made various changes of platform segmentation to survive. The results show that the mediamorphosis (media adjustment to the new platform) carried out by Jodhipati FM was successful and kept it afloat. If you look further, journals that discuss convergence of local media mention a lot of branding. For example, audience loyalty, segmentation changes, cross platform promotion, and content differentiation. Branding is an effort made to convey a positive image to various stakeholders (Fernandez (2013, in Andari & Suprayitno, 2020). As well as in branding media, it is hoped that all parties will understand the positive values conveyed.

Malmelin and Moisander conducted a metatheoric research by analyzing journals wich discuss *branding media*. The results showed that *brand extension*, *brand as identity*, *brand as differentiation*, *brand as equity*, and *brand as a product* are *media branding* concepts that are widely used by media companies. The concept of branding media described by Malmelin and Moisander (2014) will then become a reference for reading and analyzing the local media of Panjekar

Semangat in the current convergence situation. The five concepts of *branding media* can be described as follows.

Brand as product is the concept of media as a *brand* used to understand *multichannel* content and product groups. In order to describe the role of the media as a business *platform* it is advisable to coordinate the media as "a collection of *cross media brands*".

Brand as extension. A promising opportunity for media companies to develop their business into a media *brand* that can provide various *platforms* to *launch* various products. MC Dowell (2008) explains that *brand extension* is realized by creating new products under an existing brand name. Brand extensions can be developed by increasing brand awareness and building relationships with consumers to increase brand *loyalty*.

Brand as identity. Media *brand* as identity is a form of decision to design journalistic brands and content (Siegert, Gerth, Rademacher, 2011). It is used to develop and differentiate *brands* from other media companies. *Brand* as an identity forms is a brand from the side of internal *stakeholders* by expressing it out in the form of a special symbol and character of a *brand* (Bauman, 2015).

Brand as differentiation. Brand is the key element for differentiation (Olmste, 2008). From this perspective, branding is understood as a practical strategy to bring consumers to the brand and strengthen *brand loyalty* by creating competitive advantage through *brand* (Olmsted, 2008). *Brand as differentiation* can be obtained not only through "the product itself", but also packaging, name, presentation and positioning (Baumann, 2015).

Brand as equity is the overall value of a *brand*. The strength of a brand can be seen from the value built from various dimensions of *brand equity*. This concept refers to the attitude of consumers towards the brand and the value of it brings to the *brand* company. *Brand equity* also describes the relationship between a brand and its consumers. This relationship between *brands* and consumers can be built in various ways, like creating a positive experience for consumers towards *the brand* (Bluemelhuber, 2015). This positive value can be built by providing the best quality of media products (eg information) at a reasonable price.

After understanding the concept of *branding media* above, it will be used to analyze several media convergence journals to see the concept of *media branding* widely used. The following is an analysis of five convergence journals in the realm of local media.

The first journal was written by Zainal Abidin Achmad & Rachmah Ida (2019) which shows that there are several *poimedia morfoses* on Jodhipati Nganjuk radio. The results of this research indicated an effort in building a relationship with *the audience* through social media, following *the audience's* suggestions and ideas (*listeners because the real content of the radio*), changing identity (becoming a Javanese language radio) and segmentation, leading to differentiation as well, and the existence of *blur boundaries of segmentation* due to streaming. If associated with the concept of media branding, this finding leads to the formation of *brand as identity*, *brand extension* and *brand as equity*. The second journal written by Afifah Khoiri Asyir & Siti Nurbaya (2019) discusses

the convergence of moeslim magazines and mediamorphosis as a form of adjustment. The findings in this journal indicate the use of one platform for the promotion of media products (magazine promos on the website), efforts to build a two-way relationship with the *audience* (via the comments column), and strategy for advertising bonuses on other platforms. This finding is a manifestation of the existence of *brand extensions* and the embodiment of *brand equity*.

The third journal still revolves on mediamorphosis, but deals with print media. Khadziq (2016) in this journal shows the form of adaptation made by Tribun Jogja in facing the media convergence. The results show *platform convergence* addition, increasing the ability of journalists, Tribun Jogja also carries out *cross promotion* (cross promotion between platforms), and gives local media an identity style (local content). From the perspective of *branding media*, these findings indicate the use of *brand as identity* and *brand extensions*. The fourth journal is still related to medimarfosis in the realm of print media. This convergence journal was written by Ahsani Taqwim Aminudin & Nurul Hasfi / 2020. They explained the adaptation process by Central Java Pos. Some of the results lead to *branding media* including audience segmentation that leads to *brand extensions*. Besides that, Central Java Pos also made special media products lead to *brand as differentiation*. The last journal deals with the convergence of the media carried out on radio. This journal was written by Anandhita Trinoviana (2017), it shows that radio is also adapting the platform by creating streaming links and cooperation between radios. Several findings point to *media branding* including market expansion leads to *media extensions*, offering and bundling, strengthening relationships with audiences that lead to the formation of *brand identity*, and strengthening *brand image*.

The above studies show the various efforts and adaptations made by local media to survive the convergence. The discussion of local media adaptation is mostly carried out the point of view of mediamorphosis. Almost no journals discusses the convergence of local media from the point of view of *media branding*. In fact, if we look it more detail, the results of the research show the media branding efforts made. However, due to the different focus on the research, *media branding* efforts are not very visible. After further analysis, there are several elements and concepts of *media branding* in the journal.

The fact shown that media *branding* is mostly done by local media, there are not many specific research examine this issue. The concepts of media *branding* are actually found in journals under the theme of media convergence lead to mediamorphosis and journalistic competence. The five concepts identified by Malmelin and Moisander (2014) will be used as a tool to analyze the concepts and activities of *branding media* in Javanese-language local media, "Panjebar Semangat".

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The method used is descriptive qualitative. Qualitative methods are useful for describing an event through in-depth data collection and researchers as the instrument (Kriyantono, 2010). In accordance with this description, the researcher

seeks to collect data through interviews and observations. Interviews were conducted with employees of "Panjebar Semangat" Magazine and observations were made on all of their social media accounts, they are Facebook and Instagram. The subject of this research is Panjebar Semangat magazine. The results of the interviews and observations will be presented descriptively. Descriptive exposure according to Sugiyono (2012) serves to describe the object being researched with legible and conclusive research data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Panjebar Semangat magazine is one of the Javanese local magazines e which is still surviving. Panjebar Semangat was founded by dr. Soetomo and Imam Soepardi in 1933 in Surabaya with the initial aim of spreading the news of the struggle and the spirit of nationalism. However, the function and purpose of Panjebar Semangat has now shifted into a magazine that focuses on preserving Indonesian culture, and the Javanese language in particular. At the age of 86, Panjebar Semangat received an award from the Indonesian Record Museum (MURI) as the "Oldest Javanese Language Magazine".

"Surodiro Jayaning Melts the Pangastuti's forehead" is the slogan and principle that has been upheld by Panjebar Semangat and all of its personnel from the past to now. The meaning of the slogan is "all badness will be dissolved by goodness". In writing and delivering, Panjebar Semangat magazine adheres to informative and educational speech, while still carrying out the mission of politeness, in accordance with the values of Javanese cultural tolerance, namely *tepa slira*. The positive values embraced by Panjebar Semangat becomes a root identity reflected in each of the products.

The information production of Panjebar Semangat is carried out through independent reporting and contributors collaboration. These contributors send their writings to Panjebar Semangat and other language magazines to be selected, reviewed and published as a segment in the magazine. To facilitate interaction with each other, these contributors have a private group on *Facebook* under the name "Javanese Literature Minggon".

The current main leader of Panjebar Semangat is Mr. Kustono Jatmiko, with the chief editor, Mrs. Arkandi Sari. PT Pancaran Semangat Jaya is the main company of Panjebar Semangat, with another sub company, the Panjebar Semangat printing. Every week, Panjebar Semangat was able to sell around 10000-15000 copies before the pandemic. Panjebar Semangat is almost entirely dependent on customers, due to the lack of advertisers. Panjebar Semangat's own customer profile is dominated by those aged 40 and over, namely 60%, 25-40 years old 25%, and 15% under 25 years old. Panjebar Semangat's marketing area is throughout Indonesia, which is dominated by Central Java 40%, East Java 30%, DKI Jakarta and West Java 10%, and 20% outside Java.

The ability of Panjebar Semangat to survive in the mid of convergence raises the researcher's curiosity to investigate the *media branding* strategy used. To find out this, the researchers collected data from various sources. The data presented in this article were obtained through interviews via Zoom with marketing employees, observation on *e-magazines*, observations on the Fanpage

on Facebook, and the Panjebar Semangat Instagram account. The data will be analyzed with the concepts of *branding media* that have been mapped by Malmelin and Moisander (2014) and supported by several other relevant sources.

Brand as product

Panjebar Semangat is able to clearly mention the various media and non-media products they have. The main products of Panjebar Semangat are printed magazines as well as electronic magazines that can be accessed through a special designed website. Print magazines can be obtained through agents of the Panjebar Semangat marketing area, while electronic magazines can be obtained by subscribing via the web after registering and making payments. As a new product, this electronic magazine has attracted young people to try to subscribe. During the pandemic, electronic magazine enthusiasts increased by around 30-40 subscribers in two months. The difference between print and electronic magazines is in terms of appearance, where print magazines are displayed in black and white, while electronic magazines are displayed in color. Even though it is displayed in color, the electronic magazine cannot be downloaded, so if the subscription time runs out, the system will withdraw the magazine.

Another product produced by Panjebar Semangat is the insertion for children, Narayana. Narayana was originally a children's insert published once a month as part of the Panjebar Semangat magazine. When the insert was no longer produced, finally Panjebar Semangat decided to develop Narayana. Narayana is produced with a *limited edition* system with four variants. Unfortunately, Narayana is not very interested in it, so the production has not been resumed anymore. The last product that was produced was *merchandise*. Although not in the form of a media product, the existence of this *merchandise* brings consumers closer to their media products.

The form of this magazine's product is able to show that Panjebar Semangat makes use of *new media* in distributing its products. This electronic magazine began to appear in 2018, previously the Panjebar Semangat website was only used for product promotion and company profiles. Based on the statement of Malmeline and Moisander (2014) media as a product, the media business must be able to provide various *platforms*. That's why Panjebar Semangat is currently developing.

A special feature of the Panjebar Semangat magazine's content is the Alaming Lelembut, Wayang and Layang Soko Wargo segments. These three segments are one of the factors that attract customers. The consistency of Panjebar Semangat display long time ago to now makes customers easily recognize Panjebar Semangat. The distinctive design with a red line on each magazine *cover* also distinguishes Panjebar Semangat from other similar magazines.

Clearly, Panjebar Semangat's identity is reflected in each of its products. In accordance with Malmeline and Moisander (2014) states, media products with their uniqueness will distinguish them from other media products. Reflections on Panjebar Semangat's identity also appear on the online platform, namely the fanpage on Facebook and Instagram. Consistent ideas shown on Facebook and Instagram include red frames, logos, and the wayang segment translated into

Indonesian. Bauman (2015) states that this reflection is an attempt to build and maintain an identity to internal stakeholders as well as a form of introduction to the audience with the distinctive symbols and characters.

Brand as differentiation

An identity was built consistently over a long period of time will be able to give a *brand* color. *Brand* identity differentiates one product from another. Panjebar Semangat makes differentiation by strengthening its identity. This differentiation makes customers easily recognize Panjebar Semangat, then triggers *brand* loyalty.

Panjebar Semangat customers are dominated by those grouped in a community. Javanese language from various regions. Panjebar Semangat's customers are fanatical and continuously. When a family has subscribed to Panjebar Semangat, then their children will continue subscribe it. The Panjebar Semangat brand with a variety of advantages offered makes customers willing to survive from generation to generation (Olmsted, 2015).

The current media convergence poses a challenge to Panjebar Semangat, but it starts to be resolved. One of the innovations Panjebar Semangat chose to survive by publishing an electronic magazine. This reinforces the differentiation of Panjebar Semangat compared to other Javanese language magazines.

Various innovation was done by Panjebar Semangat to survive. The media convergence led them to create an electronic magazine. This step is not only done as a strategy to survive, but also a new target, younger segmentation. The existence of this electronic magazine coincides with the awareness of the marketing team to use social media as a marketing medium. *The fanpage* and Instagram of Panjebar Semangat were created before the electronic magazine Panjebar Semangat existed, but they had a vacuum and were active again in 2019.

Through this social media, Panjebar Semangat shares information from electronic magazines, Indonesian version. Not only shared coverage of a short video but also through their *fan page* account. Supporting steps to develop its products, Panjebar Semangat holds events to strengthen its relationship with the community. One of the events held by Panjebar Semangat is storytelling in Javanese. The existence of this event seeks to get closer and provide direct experience between the general public and Panjebar Semangat. This form of promotion between *platforms* is commonly referred to as *self branding*. *Self branding* is a distinctive form that distinguishes conventional branding from branding on media McDowell's (2008).

The developments and progress shown by Panjebar Semangat indicates that the magazine could provide various *platforms* to disseminate information, writing or video. Malmelin and Moisander (2014) call this activity as a *brand extension*. The enthusiasm of Panjebar's Awareness for *brand extension* in terms of products is ultimately proportional to new incoming customers.

Brand equity

Brand equity is one of the ultimate goals of the *media branding* process. Equity is not only related to consumer memory on products, but also direct

experience to add value (Bluemelhuber, 2015). The experiences and memories in consumers' minds will create an impression on the product. This impression will be associated and form the *brand* value of a product.

Consistency and all of the achievements obtained over 87 years gives an idea of how much Panjebar Semangat *brand* value has. Apart from the age side, Panjebar Semangat also offers unique information that other magazines rarely have. Fanatical loyal customers are an indication of the good relationship that exists between consumers and Panjebar Semangat. Maintaining good relationships is one way that can be done to increase *brand equity* (Malmelin and Moisander, 2014).

The results of analysis show that Panjebar Semangat take five concepts of *branding media* in the convergence era. The concept that has been mostly developed by Panjebar Semangat is *brand as equity* and *brand as product*. Bruhn says that the adoption of the *media branding* concept is flexible and can be tailored to the needs of each company (in Bauman, 2015). It is not a problem when a company focuses its *branding* model on one concept, but the five concepts must synergize with each other to achieve the goals of *media branding*. The synergy of these five concepts will build a *brand architecture* best suits the state of the media company.

Strengthening the application of *branding media* concept will be maximized if there is an understanding and knowledge on differences between conventional *branding* and *media branding*. The goal is of course to maximize the role of the *media branding* concept. McDowell (2008) offers several points that can be used as a reference in understanding media appeal. There are four points that need to be understood, they are *media brands* which usually insensitive to prices and price changes, *low risk media consumption*, easy to do media side products, and *self branding*. These four become new *insights* for the development of *media branding* of local media in the era of convergence media .

4. CONCLUSION

Media branding can be a trick for local media in the middle of media convergence. Besides adjusting in terms of journalistic equipment and capabilities, *branding media* is needed to activate these two components. The ability of local media to mix the concept of branding media with creative marketing patterns in the mid of convergence. *The media branding* activity carried out by Panjebar Semangat gave more or less positive results. The results of interviews and observations on Panjebar Semangat's social media accounts show that the concept of brand as a product and brand extension was more widely used than others. The decision to maximize two of the five *media branding* concepts is based on the current conditions and needs.

Media branding belum banyak dibahas dan dikaitkan dengan konvergensi media, sehingga masih menjadi salah satu tema yang perlu dikembangkan. Kepadaanya penelitian terkait efektifitas *media branding* bisa menjadi hal yang menarik atau diteliti. Hal ini penting agar dapat diketahui seberapa besar pengaruh yang muncul dari *media branding* pada keberlangsungan suatu bisnis media,

khususnya media lokal. Dari penelitian seperti ini pula, evaluasi pada konsep *media branding* yang relevan dan tidak relevan dapat dilakukan.

Media branding has not been widely discussed and associated with media convergence, it still a theme needs to be developed. To the next researcher, the related research deals with the effectiveness of *brand media* can be interesting point to discuss. This is very important in order to find out how far the *media branding* influence on the sustainability of a media business, especially local media. From the similar research, an relevant and irrelevant evaluation on *branding media* concepts can be done.

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